

HOLIDAY NUMBER.

LITTLE * UNITY.

TENDER, TRUSTY AND TRUE.

VOL. 1.

CHICAGO, JANUARY 1.

No. 19

* GREETING *

AS the New Year just before us opens now its friendly gate,
While within, around and o'er us busy moments stand and wait,
Let us here, in spirit meeting, give you all our hearty greeting,
Wish you happiest returnings, filled with blessing and good cheer!

Wish you first that double treasure, health of body and of mind;
Riches, friends, and all true pleasure, we would wish that you might find;
Yet should these be part denied you, there will still be work beside you—
May your courage, wise and hopeful, lead your life on faithfully!

In the New Year's glad beginning, while our hearts, new born in love,—
Late attuned with Christmas meaning, like an impulse from above,—
Chord to-day with something higher, waken with renewed desire,
Let us choose some heartfelt purpose, which shall live throughout the year,—

Something that shall give direction to our daily active part,
Mingling thought for life's perfection with the outflow of the heart.
For such work as shall come nearest that of Him whom we hold dearest,
Let us take these words He gave us, this our chosen text shall be—

Surely they who act upon it learn what God's great blessing is:
"Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of one of these"—
Least in years or world's position, least in mind's or heart's condition,
If ye did it from the spirit, "ye have done it unto Me."

1882.

BESSIE'S CHRISTMAS.

L. M. T.

As Bessie was coming from the grocery with two ounces of dried currants in a tiny parcel, a big, pleasant-faced German was cutting the broken boughs from an ever-green tree fastened against the doorpost of his shop. When he finished, and saw Bessie's wistful face, he gathered up the boughs and put them into her hands.

"O, thank you!" she cried, joyfully.

"See, mother; we can have a Christmas tree," were her first words at home. The mother was mending a pair of little stockings for Robby, and only smiled, without speaking. She had nothing to hang on a Christmas tree for her little girl and boy. After they were asleep she stirred the dried currants and some brown sugar into the dough for a loaf of wheaten bread, and set it away to rise. This was to be their Christmas cake. When Bessie awoke in the morning, her mother was taking the loaf from the oven, and she had on her bonnet and shawl.

"Where are you going, mother?" asked Bessie.

"I am going to help Mrs. Mason's cook, to-day. There is to be a houseful of company."

"Sunday!"

"Christmas, you know."

"May I take Robby to the Sunday School?"

"I am sorry, Bessie; but Robby has such a cold, and his shoes are so bad, I am afraid he will have the croup again if he goes out to-day." Bessie softly cried a little. There would be a Christmas tree at the Sunday School. Bessie did not know there would be a present for every girl and boy. She had never seen any Christmas tree except those in the store windows. But she soon wiped away her tears, and sprang out of bed to give her mother a good-bye kiss.

"Take care of Robby, and remember to keep the fire burning."

"Yes, mother; and may we make a Christmas tree with the boughs that the man gave me?"

"Yes, Bessie; make as fine a tree as you can; Robby will be pleased with it."

When the mother was gone there was plenty of work to be done. After Bessie had dressed herself and Robby she made ready the breakfast. As it was Christmas, Bessie poured hot water on the grounds in the tea-pot, and after she had shaken it awhile, the water came through the spout of the tea-pot with a faint yellow tinge. She sweetened it with brown sugar, and their tea made the breakfast seem quite like a feast. Robby helped in the housekeeping. His round, rosy face, thoughtfully watching everything, was Bessie's joy and comfort. His chubby legs trotted to the cupboard with each cup and plate, as she washed and wiped them. He helped her smooth the spreads upon the bed, and kept out of her way while she struggled with the big broom, trying to sweep; for Bessie was only seven, and not much bigger than Robby.

"Now we can have our Christmas tree," she said, when the housework was finished. Robby climbed into a chair and stood holding its back. Bessie brought the three hemlock boughs and tied them together in a

bunch, like a feather-duster. By a happy chance there was a small knot-hole in the leaf of the table. Through this hole the ends of the boughs were crowded, and the Christmas tree stood upright. Robby slapped the back of his chair with glee.

"Now we must hang some things on it," said Bessie, with a cheerful and business-like air. The tea-spoons proved too heavy. Two or three nails lying in the window might do, but they were not very pretty. Robby climbed down from his chair, and came bringing his mother's work-basket. What treasures! Bessie clapped her hands and laughed with delight. Robby laughed, too, handing her a spool of red cotton, which she tied on a nodding twig. Spools of all colors, even the thimble and needle-case, were soon gaily swinging on this curious Christmas tree. The clock had long since struck twelve, and Bessie now brought the new loaf of wheaten bread.

"Oh," cried Robby, "its got eyes!" and his little thumb and finger picked out a plum. What a surprise to them both that Christmas cake was! They ate and ate until the loaf was more than half gone. They hung the plummiest pieces on their tree. When they had eaten all they could they sat quite still, resting and contented.

"If there was only an angel over it," said Bessie, looking at the tree.

"What angel?" asked Robby.

Then Bessie tried to describe to him the Christ child she had seen hovering over a beautiful tree that stood every evening in the window of a grand toy shop. A calcium light just above the child shed its brilliancy over everything, and she thought it must be the angel, who, having made the Christmas tree, now illumined it with his presence. She did not know that it was the angel of loving endeavor, shining then from her face, which illumined her own little tree with its light; and as she and Robby knelt at their mother's side that night, she added to her usual prayer "Dear Father in Heaven, I thank thee for such a nice Christmas tree, and for this beautiful happy Christmas," while the poor mother, bending over her, thanked God, in her heart, for Bessie's joyous loving spirit, that made happiness for herself and others.

IN WINTER QUARTERS.

CORA H. CLARKE.

When you are sitting safe and comfortable by the open fire, does it occur to you to wonder what has become of all the numerous little creatures—birds, beasts, reptiles and insects—that were so active and happy during the warm summer weather? Do you see any of them about in the woods and fields?

Most of the birds take advantage of the pleasant means of traveling which their wings afford them, and seek a warmer climate, but some of them kindly stay with us all winter. Ernest Ingersoll, in his charming little book, "Friends Worth Knowing," says that in January, in the near neighborhood of New York, over fifty species of birds appear with more or less regularity. They comprise two classes: those which remain the year round,

and those which come down to escape the severity of a Northern winter, which even their arctic-bred, hardy constitutions are unable to endure.

As for other animals, you have probably read that one way in which they are enabled to escape the effects of the cold of winter, is by passing into a state of torpidity; in quadrupeds, the position is the same as in ordinary sleep, the body being rolled into a ball, with the head, legs and tail gathered together, so as best to preserve the animal heat. Before passing into this condition, the animal selects some safe retreat, burrow, cave, hollow tree or nest of dry leaves. Some animals accumulate a stock of food before hibernating, and rouse up on warm days to partake of it. If the temperature falls below a certain point, the animal, instead of becoming still more profoundly asleep, is awakened. This is supposed to be a provision to enable it to take measures to escape the effects of a too severe cold. It is only quadrupeds with claws which hibernate—those with hoofs do not.

The Encyclopædia Britannica says that all animals belonging to the amphibians and reptiles hibernate in cold or temperate climates. Land turtles bury themselves in the ground, and fresh water ones in the banks or at the bottom of lakes and rivers. Lizards and snakes retire to holes in trees, under stones or among dead leaves, where many species congregate in large numbers, and pass the winter closely entwined. Frogs generally hibernate in masses in mud at the bottom of the water.

Hibernation has been observed in some fishes of the temperate zones. They do not become torpid, but their vital functions are simply lowered, and they hide in holes, not going abroad in search of food.

Fresh-water mollusks are also said to bury themselves in the mud at the bottom of ponds and rivers, and the land snails hide themselves in or beneath moss or dead leaves. Snails further protect themselves by putting on double windows, as it were:—

“At the first hint of frost, our snail feels the approach of a resistless lassitude, and, creeping under some mouldering log or half buried boulder, it attaches itself, aperture upwards, by exuding a little glue, and settles itself for a season of hibernating sleep. Withdrawing into the shell, the animal throws across the aperture a film of slimy mucous, which hardens as tight as a miniature drum-head. As the weather becomes colder the creature draws itself a little farther in, and makes another ‘epiphragm,’ and so on until often five or six protect the animal sleeping snugly coiled in the deepest recesses of his domicile.”—*“Friends Worth Knowing.”*

Earth worms are said to pass the winter, either singly or rolled up with others into a ball, at the bottom of their burrows.

And what becomes of our insect friends? Some of them die at the approach of winter, but Dr. Packard tells us that at no time of the year need the entomologist rest from his labors. In winter, under the bark of trees or in moss he can find many species.

Some of the inhabitants of fresh water, caddis-worms, beetles, water-bugs, small crustacea, and other little animals, may be found alive and active under the ice in mid-winter.

An animal which in one locality may remain torpid in the winter, farther south may be active. So you see that it will be quite worth your while to notice what goes on about you in winter—no book can tell you just what it will be, and perhaps no one else has precisely your opportunity for observation.

GRASSHOPPERS IN WINTER.

Grasshoppers during the winter remain hidden among the grass and leaves in sunny and sheltered spots, and in such places, on any mild day in winter, when the ground is free from snow, they may be found warmed into activity and hopping about in quite a lively manner.

R. H.

Little wood-mice sometimes take up their winter quarters in old deserted bird's nests. I once found in a thicket of high blueberry bushes one which mousie had roofed and lined with thick soft moss. He was usually at home, but whenever any one approached his dwelling with intent to call, he would very quietly slip out, and, dropping to the ground, would instantly disappear in the bushes.

R. H.

An English gentleman living at Kingston, on the Thames, had a kitchen built on the banks of the river, and his servants made a pet of a frog which had his hole in the skirting, and this frog came out of his hole every evening for three successive winters to bask before the fire.

In some tropical countries, during a season of continued heat and dryness, many animals pass into a condition analogous to hibernation, called *æstivation*.

WASTE IN MATERIAL.

III.

KATE GANNETT WELLS.

It is easier to avoid waste in material than in thought or action, therefore make it one of the three hundred and seventy-five resolutions that you will form between Christmas and New Year's; and, as it is a resolve that will need only patience and eyesight, perhaps you will keep it better than any other determination. By eyesight I mean you can always see when you are wasting things, and by doing your work slowly you need not waste anything. Yet there is a kind of care that does not pay for the time it costs, like the economy that a lady showed, who paid her dressmaker \$3.00 a day, and then gave her for her use the threads which had been carefully pulled out of an old garment when it was ripped to pieces. The dressmaker stopped every few seconds to thread her needle.

Just at Christmas time there is a great deal of waste in the presents that people make to each other; in getting the wrong thing for the wrong person; like sending a gun to a boy whose mother does not wish him to shoot

or giving a doll to a girl who would rather have soldiers; or books to little children who can't read, and whose mammas don't want to read to them.

Then there is waste in all the scrap-books sent to children's hospitals, if the pictures are pasted in the album upside down; in the pincushions where the ends of the worsted have not been run under the back side of the stitches, so that pretty soon grandma's cushion, with which she was at first much pleased, looks like a scrap of rag carpet. Some say it takes so long to tuck in the ends. So it does; but if you don't, your present is nearly wasted. To think only enough of a friend to do careless work for her is not very complimentary. Then there is waste in the jig-sawing, when the saw goes a little too deeply into the curves and circles of the pattern, so that ends have to be glued together, and often with watery glue. Home-made valentines, where the words are spelt wrong, are wasted. Oh! there is no end to the useless presents.

Girls waste material in half stitching the seams of dresses; in sewing on buttons with too fine thread, because they are too lazy to go across the room to get some that was stronger; by and bye when they laugh, off fly the buttons. Some put three-fluted, shirred, puffed flounces on their skirts, but only baste in the facing. They go to a party or to walk; the high heel of their boot catches in a long basting; it breaks; the facing falls more and more; they pin it up and through the flounce, and soon that begins to break, break away, and the creases of the fluting or the shirring threads come out.

Boys take a big sheet of paper for a sum in long division, which will begin at the upper left hand and end at the lower right hand corner of the paper,—a diagonal sum,—and then they take another sheet for the next one, instead of tucking it away under the first. Little girls cut out doll's paper dresses, and then make the hole for the head too large; they sew patchwork whose four corners never meet, and when the quilt is to be a silk one it is expensive. *Just enough* is the rule by which to avoid waste of material. It takes calculation, but that's fun; it is like a puzzle to see how much can be got out of one yard, and to learn to cut out economically is an art.

Ever so much embroidery is all waste; the material, silks and crewels are good, but the patterns are badly drawn, and the stitches are loose, or in all kinds of directions. Who wants a canary bird as big as a pigeon on a twig not stout enough to hold a fly; or a stork who has no ground on which to put his feet; or a cup-shaped flower worked as if it were a flat one? Yet you have all seen just such work on the tidies and table cloths you give as presents, haven't you? Better have the alphabet as decoration, if evenly worked, than all these queer mistakes about nature. Begin the Christmas presents for 1883 in January, 1882, and make them all perfect; then it is pleasant to give and receive.

HOW SOME PRESENTS WENT WANDERING.

Molly Kolley began at seven years old to make some of her own presents, because she had not then, nor even

in years after, much spending money. She began with book-marks, with the words "I love you" and "Remember me," worked on card-board, and gradually advanced to embroidered cushions and bags. When she was twenty she had charge of a table at a fair, and asked an old lady, to whom she had sent an annual gift, to help her. A bundle was sent, in which Molly found the queerest mixture of good and bad articles, with a note, saying that these were Christmas gifts which had been carefully preserved, because they were the work of Molly's fingers; but that if they could be sold at her fair they might be of some use at last. The poor girl blushed crimson, all to herself, as she looked at her careless work, but placed it on a corner of her table, where it was sold at wholesale to a lady who sent it to another fair, and from there it went down South.

K. G. W.

THE JIG-SAW.

Molly's cousin had a jig-saw, wood and patterns given him one Christmas; so the next year he set to work to make all his gifts. He gave his mother a letter rack, whose sides were not glued in, and every time the rack was lifted, that the table might be dusted, out came the sides and down fell the letters. He sent Molly a *carte de visite* frame, in which she put her favorite photograph, but the support at the back of the frame was only fastened with glue. The furnace heat dried the glue, the support fell off, the glass was broken, and the picture fell against some drops of water; and Molly wished people would either give perfect things or nothing, for which she yet had to say, thank you.

K. G. W.

"Then there is nothing common, nothing trifling, nothing unawonderful in this universe! Beauty far off! Sights in Europe! Why, here, now, all around us, under our feet, in the air, the weed springing up unbidden in our flowerpot, the bit of spar or seashell on our mantelpiece, the paving stone we rattle over, the most familiar, unsightliest, dearest thing that we can name has more of God in it than we can ever see. Explain it away and we have only explained a way through it to deeper marvels beyond."

"We often say God is infinitely great. We instinctively look up to heaven when we pray. And doubts often beset us, because, to our thought he seems too large and too remote to be our God,—to care for *me*. That is true: God is the infinitely great and infinitely remote; but every whit as truly he is the infinitely little, and so the infinitely close."

"Think of the creatures that play in a single drop of ditch-water as the whales play in the Atlantic. Each one of those creatures has its perfect structure, its finished anatomy, its instincts and its wants, and those wants provided for, its little hungers and rages, its fatigues and rests, its pains and pleasures, and at last its death,—who knows but its immortality also? Thinking of such things we begin to feel that perhaps the truth is, God is not too far off, but too near for us to see. And God in all, God through all, becomes the living fact."—W. C. GANNETT, in "*A Year of Miracle*."

THE LITTLE UNITY.

40 MADISON STREET, CHICAGO.

One copy, per year, - - - - - 50 cts.
 To subscribers for UNITY, or twelve to one address, each, 35 cts.
 To Clubs or Sunday Schools, single or in quantity - 25 cts.

ELLEN T. LEONARD, Editor.

Departments: Associate Editors:
 WHAT TO SEE, - - Miss Cora H. Clarke, Jamaica Plains, Boston, Mass.
 WHAT TO DO, - - Mrs. K. G. Wells, 155 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.
 Communications for the Editor to be sent to Hyde Park, Ill.; for the Departments, as above.

Entered at the Chicago Post Office as second-class matter

TALKING TIMES AND THINGS TO DO.

A group of bright young faces is always a New Year's greeting in itself! There is something essentially "new year" about it, whether one sees it in January or June. Perhaps those faces appear to us like our resolutions, and the fresh life therein the same with which we would gladly carry them out.

But here, in thought, as I see you all now, my children, there is an added lustre to your faces—the brightness that lingers after the joy of the Christmas time. That happiness which is like none other has been yours in part, when you saw the gladness in the face of your mother, father, brother, sister or friend, upon receiving the Christmas gift you had so carefully selected, or thoughtfully planned and patiently worked upon with the skill of your own hands. That happiness of which the birth of Christ was the beginning, and our Christmas day, truly kept, is the emblem.

There is a "wrong side out," however, to all the finest fabrics, and there are a great many seams and raw-edge ravelings to the wrong side of this. Fill your spare time long before Christmas with planning, making and buying the little gifts which in your best judgment are most suited to those for whom you intend them, as also they must be to your own time and skill in making, or money for buying. Then you escape; at the outset, the "wrong side" of Christmas, because your thoughts are filled with the "right side." Our living is all made up of giving and taking. The "taking" comes naturally enough to most of us, and we need therefore to be taught and to teach ourselves to hold our attention in the direction of the "giving." The true and happy balance of our living is reached only when both are in fair proportion within us.

Have your present honestly your own, even though it must be ever so small. Do not think because you are only a child you cannot make your friend a present that is nice enough out of your own resources. It is not so. What are your resources? Do you have your little allowance of pocket money? Then you have probably been saving up for Christmas. Have you twelve cents? Or one dollar? To how many friends do you wish to give? Perhaps mother needs an emery for her work box, or brother a top. If the little girls can sew neatly, a pin-case for father's vest pocket is just the thing, or a new holder for mother. And the boy who will not gladly twist up a good store of lamp-lighters for mother, or whittle and construct a little dray-cart, with spool wheels, for baby brother, is hardly to be found—if he only thinks of it.

It is this "thinking of it" that is the essence of the Christmas birth. God thought of us, and Christ was born. His life and death were one intense realization of this meaning. So forceful and intense was the meaning of that character, that the work it did then, has been carried on all these hundreds and thousands of years of succeeding generations, and will go on forever. He not only died to establish a truth God had given him. He *lived* for it such a life as had never been lived before. "He gave his life," and "He laid down his life," have a higher meaning than the death of the body. It is self that is "laid down" when comes our Christmas birth. When we can find our greatest happiness in what we may do to supply the real needs of those around us, whether it be needs of the body or needs of the soul, then Christ is born within us.

No wonder there is added brightness to your faces. There is also an earnestness in some, an eagerness in some. That is the New Year part, which follows close upon the Christmas birth. It means, to begin again; to take hold anew; to find more; to grow better. That is what we mean by "progress." It is that power within us which makes us keep going on, seeking further, craving outlook. It must be that we make a great many mistakes, and so nature is full of new beginnings to remind us to take another start. Things you have not done that you wish you had, and those you have done and wish you had not,—turn your back upon them, keep only the flavor of their remembrance in your thought, face the New Year and begin again. In this sense, every day has the New Year meaning. Our living is full of new beginnings. We should keep our hearts continually at the New Year's turn.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

More than five years ago a small day school was started in this city by some ladies of Unity church, expenses to be met by the church, in a neighborhood which was occupied almost entirely by a poor and rough class of people. It was for the little girls of the vicinity, ages ranging from three to thirteen years, and was to teach them to read, to sew, and to do the common simple work of the kitchen.

A small house was rented, a matron employed, and by voluntary help from the ladies she was provided with an assistant each day. A regular paid assistant has since been supplied.

The faithful care, steady work and kind donations that have been put into this enterprise, have brought about results which become more satisfying each year. The good effect upon the entire neighborhood has been quite marked, through the direct improvement it has been to the children and the homes in which they live. The girls, coming at nine o'clock, are first made clean and tidy by the washing of faces and hands, and combing of hair, after which the session begins. The school is open Saturdays, as also during July and August.

In the Annual Report of 1880 we find the following: "The school-rooms have been made as attractive as possible with the means at our disposal, and by the help of

many kindly donated maps, pictures, books, toys, etc. The success in this respect is so complete that it is difficult to persuade some of the most forlorn children to go home at all. * * We have aimed, primarily, to supply the pitifully lacking home-life and motherly interest that these children need, more than anything else, and to study the nature and capacity of each. * * A plain lunch is served every day, a table being prepared for six, and arranged and served, as nearly as possible, as it would be in a private family. Three or four children take lunch with the teachers, and, under supervision, cook and serve. * * As the work of practical management goes on, and the school increases in numbers, it becomes evident there must be a constant guard against imposture and persistent, unnecessary begging by the parents of the pupils. * * It has been found absolutely necessary that children and parents should understand that an equivalent must be rendered for what is received. Garments are occasionally purchased. Material is sometimes furnished by the parents. A system has been devised of giving, for good conduct and industry, credits which are convertible into garments, and the plan has been entirely successful, producing a desire to earn, instead of becoming a charity recipient. Thirteen girls have gone out to work the past year.

The plan, faithfully adhered to, of attempting no religious instruction, has greatly increased the influence of the school over all with whom it has had dealings."

The average attendance for 1879 was thirty-nine pupils. Each year they have had a festival for Christmas at the church, for Thanksgiving at the school, and a summer picnic. The piece of ground connected with the school-building was converted into a garden, and the children taught how to work in it. Flowers and vegetables were successfully raised.

The success of this school, and the good work it has accomplished, has been so marked that all possible efforts have been made to meet its growing needs. During the past year, upon the death of Mr. Eli Bates, of Unity church, the school received a legacy of \$20,000, part of which is to be used for a building suited to their purposes, and the rest as a fund to help meet the additional expenses of its growth.

We are glad to be able to give our readers a Holiday number which is double its usual size. With the next issue, however, LITTLE UNITY will return to its former appearance.

WHAT TO READ.

THE YOUNG MECHANIC. Illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.75.
AMONGST MACHINES. Illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.75.

Two books useful and attractive to all boys who have a taste for using tools. They were written by an Englishman, who also wrote "Boy Engineers," to answer the question so often coming up among boys, "How is such a thing made?" The first, "The Young Mechanic," tells, among other things, how to use a saw, a plane and other carpenter's tools; how to sharpen and set tools; how to harden and temper them; how to make a box, a table, a cage, a steam engine. It gives the use of the lathe, and how to turn soft and hard wood.

The second, "Amongst Machines," instructs in the de-

tails of some of the ordinary machines. It describes working in brass, iron and wood; shows the use of the wedge, screw, bolts, nuts, etc.; tells how pins, paper and glass are made; ending with a chapter on the greatest machine of all, the human body, its nerves, bones and muscles.

For boys from fourteen to eighteen.

LITTLE UNITY FOR 1882.

The prospectus proper is a sort of hotel bill of fare, from which one learns what are the viands to be set before him. The hotel frequenter is generally he who likes to pick and choose. If he were not originally, he soon learns to be. Perhaps his food digests the better for the picking and choosing, and perhaps not. A certain amount of choosing is probably necessary. At the plain family table one is led more directly to follow the example of Paul, and "eat what is set before him, asking no questions for conscience sake." A half way course between two extremes is generally the best stand. One who believes this, would not like to be denied the privilege of suggesting his preferences for the private table where he dined daily; neither would he like to be reduced to continual hotel fare. For the genuine comfort of the average mental diet, let us fix upon the few papers and periodicals best suited to our digestion, settle down in our quiet nook with those of our own about us, and "enter into it the treasures" thereof. If we have made our choice with due thought, we shall find the regular nourishment needed.

LITTLE UNITY

is essentially a family repast. A very plain and frugal one, too. We cannot show you our bill of fare. The fact is, we haven't any. Whether our family will grow enough larger—and our resources correspondingly so—in the future to warrant one, time alone can show. At present we can only follow the plan with which we began, and give to our readers a paper for the coming year substantially the same as it has been during the one past.

It has been the wish of UNITY for some years to add to itself a supplement which should be for the use of the children, and for the parents in the children's behalf. We say "for their use," because that is what we mean, rather than for their amusement. Two or three generations ago a book or magazine for children was a thing almost unknown; a toy bought at a store, very rare. Children depended more upon their own resources; did not look so much for amusement as for occupation, and learned to read from such books as their parents had. Humanity always has its rebound from one extreme to the other, upon different questions, before it finds the right level; and while we rejoice at the increase of supplies to meet the energetic demand made by the children of to-day, we cannot but recognize the growing tendency toward mere amusement and profusion to an extent which is bewildering and unsatisfying to both parent and child. "If his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" Do not feed those hungry little minds too much with stories. Give them natural facts, simply and interestingly told. They are the loaves which nourish.

It was in pursuance of this thought that LITTLE UNITY came into being. We expect it to need the parental background to bring out and display before the child's mind the meaning and uses which we aim it shall contain. Few parents who take it cannot find time for this. LITTLE UNITY has also been found a very useful help by many teachers in our public schools, from which to read or form the basis of a little talk as a part of the opening morning exercises, since the reading of the Bible has been so generally discontinued. More especially does it hope to meet the uses of the Sunday School teacher, not only in the lessons it supplies, but here again for the occupation of such spare moments as may be found outside of the regular recitation and conversation connected therewith, in the place of the usual child's story paper distributed. The element of home freedom and simplicity of taste should live in the Sunday School, while that of Sunday School aims and pursuits should have place at home, and in exactly this union does LITTLE UNITY hope to find its mission.

While we shall hope in time to enlarge and improve upon this plan, add beauty in the shape of an occasional really good illustration, with variety and increase of reading matter, we do expect at the same time to hold to the original motive which we have tried herein to set forth.

E. T. IFFORD, Editor.

"Unity" Sunday School Lessons — Series XI.

THE MORE WONDERFUL GENESIS;

OR,

CREATION UNCEASING.

BY H. M. SIMMONS.

LESSON I.

THE OLD GENESIS STORY.

For a long time the first chapter of the book of "Genesis" was read as Moses-inspired, and a true account of creation. To-day we sometimes hear men make sport of it. But this is not the wise way. Whatever errors it may contain, the story is

BOTH BEAUTIFUL AND NATURAL.

Read it again, and see how simple its language. See, too, in how noble and dignified a style it speaks of Deity. It does not, as many seem to think, picture a visible Creator, rudely shaping all things by hand, like a mechanic. It rather represents God as a creative "breath" or "spirit," moving invisibly through chaos, and working by command or fiat: "Let there be light," "Let the earth bring forth," "Let the waters bring forth." It is almost as if the old writer, like a modern poet, saw Deity working only unseen through law. Then, too, see how thoroughly natural the old story is when read aright.

WHY THE SEVEN DAYS?

This creation in six days, and rest on the seventh, may seem absurd to us; but it appeared quite reasonable to the ancient Eastern nations. For long before the story was written, the week was kept as a sacred division of time among them. A large part of their earliest religion had seen the worship of the seven visible planets, including the sun and moon. To these seven planets, or planetary gods, as they often fancied them, they had dedicated many things in series of sevens,—among others the successive days. Relics of the old custom still remain in our names Sunday and Monday, or moon-day. Our names of the next four days are taken from corresponding Teutonic gods; but in the French language we still see them called after the planets: Mardi, or Mars' day; Mercredi, or Mercury's day; Jeudi, or Jupiter's day; and Vendredi, or Venus' day. The seventh was consecrated to the farthest planet, and we still call it Saturday, or Saturn's day. On account of the gloomy notions about this last slow planet and god, this seventh day was kept austere as a day of rest by the ancient Babylonians, and in that sense was called *Sabbatu* by the later Assyrians. From the Assyrians the Israelites seem to have derived their Sabbath of rest, which soon came to be one of the chief features of their religion. It being held so sacred, men sought to trace an ancient and divine origin for it. Hence the Sabbath naturally entered into their speculations about the genesis or origin of things, and helped to shape this story of creation. Their so sacred rest-day was thought to have been heralded and sanctioned by a divine rest; and as they, in preparation for it, finished their work in six days, so they fancied the Creator had finished his. Viewed in this way, the "six days" of the story are no longer absurd, but a natural outgrowth of the sacred regard for the wise and blessed rest of the Sabbath day.

WHY IN THIS ORDER?

Not only the "six days," but the successive days' works in the order of the story, are natural. It may seem strange to us that they could think trees, and even day and night, created before the sun. But to them the sun was not, as to us, the great source of light and life, but only a sort of lamp for the mere inside of

THE WORLD-TENT.

For the old poetic tent-dwellers of the east figured the world as a greater tent:—the level earth as its foundations; the domed sky as its roof, with sun, moon and stars as moving lights hung under it; while beyond the blue sky-roof were "the heavens," holding the waters that fed the rains and were the source of all things, but also inhabited by the various divine beings. This so natural fancy was frequent in the East, and often occurs in the Bible. A psalmist (Ps. 104: 2) figures the Creator "stretching out the sky like a curtain," or canopy; and Isaiah (34: 4) tell how the sky "shall be rolled together as a scroll," and the stars shall fall off like leaves from a vine or figs from a tree. Sometimes the sky-roof is made solid, and Job (37: 18) figures it as "strong and like molten glass." Above it are the waters and the dwelling of God, who, according to a psalmist (Ps. 104: 3) "layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters." Thence, by opening the windows of the sky, God sent down the rains as in the story of the flood, and the manna (see Ps. 78: 23), and "pours out a blessing" (see Mal. 3: 10). These were doubtless partly poetic figures, but were often regarded as facts; and so late as in our era, Cosmas, in his

"Christian Topography of the Universe," describes the world in detail, as built on the plan of the Hebrew tabernacle or tent.

From this same thought the "Genesis" story is written. Hence, after the creation of "the heavens" or divine dwelling, and of the formless and still watery earth as foundation for the tent, the six days' works are marked out in this order:

1. The general light and the day itself created in preparation for the work.
2. The world-tent pitched. The sky or "firmament" spread out like a canopy, dividing the earth below from the waters and heavens above.
3. The watery chaos beneath drained, "the waters" gathered to one place, and the dried tent-floor of land carpeted with grass and furnished with all vegetable life.
4. The finished tent now hung within with sun, moon and stars,—chiefly to light the inside, but also with movements to mark the time of day and year.
5. The furnished and lighted tent next stocked,—beginning with the less important regions of sea and air, with fish and fowl.
6. Lastly, the land, the chief apartment, stocked with beasts and cattle and among them, man made and placed as the godlike ruler of all.
7. The Creator's rest consecrating the Sabbath.

So orderly and natural is this old "Genesis" story. But of course

NO LONGER TAKEN AS TRUE.

Few scholars to-day think it came from Moses, or that it was written until many centuries after Moses' time. It seems to have been partly borrowed from the East by the Israelites and adapted to their theories. But wherever it came from, it was only a guess at the problem, and no more inspired and infallible than other guesses. Indeed, much experience and study since, have shown its mistakes and corrected them. Geology [shows that the creation of the earth occupied hundreds of thousands of years, instead of six days; nor is there any truth in the supposition that the "days" meant ages, for the writer speaks naturally throughout, and his repeated mention of evening and morning shows he meant literal days. Geology and botany both declare that trees were not created before the sun, as here, and we know day and night were not. Most astronomers think the sun was created millions of years before the earth itself. The old "Genesis" story, however natural and poetic, is not true.

BUT A GREATER GENESIS IS STILL SEEN.

Though the old story proves wrong, the divine work and wonders of creation are not thereby lost or lessened, but increased. For under it is found, written in nature, a greater story,—far older, yet ever new,—the story of *creation unceasing*. The little only becomes large, and the "days" everlasting. Even the very acts of the old story are all still done, not once alone as there, but going on before our eyes forever; while manifold other creative acts are added. Science searches through the universe only to find written everywhere this more wonderful and diviner genesis or birth.

The aim of these lessons is to trace this greater genesis:—to show how much more marvelous are the real facts than the old writer's fancies; how that wondrous week is still here in this week, and those six divine "days" are repeated in every day; and how even science sings a grander and more religious hymn of creation.

HINTS AND QUERIES.

(14.) THE THREE EVILS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARY.—The first is those "weeds!" (See Hint 4.) An unweeded library can unteach half that the Lessons try to teach. The weed-books are of several kinds,—the simple time-writers, the sensational, the morbidly good, the carelessly immoral, the badly doctrinal. No teacher in the school sows so much seed for good or ill as the librarian and her assistants.

The second evil happens when the children are allowed to *maltreat the books* without loss of privilege. A lesson in honor, in respect for public property as public property, and for the rights of the next reader and co-laborer waiting for his turn,—or else a lesson in dishonor, in neglect of public property because public, and of the next man's rights, goes out with every book taken from the library; and which lesson it is, depends on the public sentiment maintained in the school about the use and abuse of books. No undue tear, or stain, or mark, or delay, should go by unnoticed by teacher and librarian.

The third evil comes when the *book-taking interferes one jot with the other work* of the short school-hour. A catalogue given to every family, and a card to every book-taker, with the simple rule that catalogues must be kept and cards filled at home, prevents one-half the trouble; and the rest vanishes before a wise system of collecting and delivering the books at the class-seats before and after the lessons. Not the loss of a sentence, not the turn of a head, is necessary.

Great is the librarian, and greatly to be praised, who avoids the three evils! Then let the superintendent and teachers observe "Hint 8" about "teaching reading," and the S. S. Library becomes an unquestionable good to the home-life and the church-life.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES.

UNCLE JENK.

I want to tell the readers of *LITTLE UNITY* of a few Sunday Schools I have recently visited, with some hints of their excellencies.

First, I want to tell of Miss Brown's school, at Lawrence, Kansas, where some sixty members, old and young, reviewed three month's work before a Conference I attended, reciting in concert the title, the motto and the leading points in each lesson. I am inclined to think that this is the best taught Sunday School in *LITTLE UNITY*'s circle, because Miss Brown and her teachers believe that it is better to teach a few things well than to teach many things poorly. They are not content with teaching the children to understand a good lesson, but they are anxious to make them feel it. Know it by head first, then by heart afterwards.

The next school I want to speak of is Mr. Blake's school, at Quincy. All things considered, I am inclined to think that this school still holds the place it has occupied so much of the time since the organization of the Western Unitarian Sunday School Society, over seven years ago, as the Banner Sunday School in the Western Conference, as, indeed, it ought to be, for has it not had in the past such excellent Sunday School workers as Hunting, Hosmer, and dear Mrs. Benneson, whose portrait was decorated with green and autumn leaves in the Sunday School room, showing how her memory is revered by the children, and it now has Mr. Blake, *UNITY*'s chorister, Mrs. Parker, the author of the *Shorter Unity Services for Infant Classes*, and Mrs. Benneson's daughters to help it along. This school is excellent for the following reasons: 1. It has such beautiful singing, not loud and boisterous, but careful, thoughtful, melodious singing. It showed me how much more beauty and sweetness there is in the "Unity Services and Songs" than our schools have yet found out, and I wished that all our Sunday School workers might have the privilege of hearing this singing. Then I am sure the W. U. S. S. would have orders for a great many more of them. 2. It was a very reverent school. I mean, the children came in quietly and respectfully, the boys did not scuffle and crowd, and the girls did not whisper and giggle; they came in and went out quietly. 3. It had such a beautiful infant class. Fifty little birdies brooded by Mrs. Parker. I heard them go through their little services. They recited and sang them without book or note, and I was glad that they were printed, that other schools, if they will, can have a similar infant class. 4. Mr. Blake works on the principle that no teacher is better than a poor one, so he had but few teachers, but they had very large classes, which they held with marked power. The teaching was on the same principle as Miss Brown's—few points well taught rather than much detail poorly digested.

At Mr. Learned's school, in St. Louis, I found this capital idea concerning the library: They have, for the time being, selected about one hundred and fifty books out of their large library, the very best, the children's classics. The books which every child ought to read, but which they are in danger of overlooking. All the other books are put away, and if they read any, they must read these. Mr. Learned made this suggestion, which we are glad to pass on to *LITTLE UNITY* workers. We want to prepare a list of one hundred books that will constitute a children's classic library, indispensable to every Sunday School library. Will every Sunday School worker, parent and reader, interested in this project, send their suggestive list, as full as may be, to the editor of *LITTLE UNITY*? These lists will be carefully revised and compiled by a committee of ladies, and in due time we will publish the result.

I have room to mention but one more school, and that is the beautiful Mission School of Mr. Snyder's church, in St. Louis. I heard four hundred little children, gathered from the overcrowded tenement houses where the poorer people live, sing some of the chants, anthems and glorias of Mr. Blake's *Unity Services and Songs*, in a way that was delightful and inspiring, and still I know a good many of our parish schools, whose children come from cultivated homes, and are trained to music, who hesitate to use this book, because, they say, it is too hard for the children. Is it because the children are not willing to try, or is it because superintendent and teachers have not faith in them, or shrink from the work? It pays to work hard in order to do a good thing well.

Wishing all my nephews and nieces a happy New Year, I must postpone any further notes to some other time.

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